



THE *Saturday*, in its own courteous way, has pointed out what the "specials" ought to tell us, but do not; and what they do tell us, but ought not. This little gem from the *Times* correspondent is, however, unique. It having "transpired"—as no doubt he would say—that the treaty of peace was about to be signed, this gentleman appears to have loitered about the house in which "Count Bismarck and his

secretaries are wont to work." The mantle of the old "Window peepers" seems to have descended on "Our own," who—though standing stretching his neck in the street, in what strikes us as rather an undignified way—saw "two heads" above the window blind. He says:—"There were only the tops of two heads to be seen above the railings—two heads: one bald, the other covered with gray hair—both belonging to tall men. I cannot say who owned them; but at that moment M. Favre and the Chancellor were engaged in the final and animated debate which preceded the signature." Really, sir, what a pity it was that there was no hole in the window frames—no aperture to which you could have applied that curious ear! Where were the sentries, though? And did they ever hear what Colonel Hardy did to Mr. Paul Pry under somewhat similar circumstances? Seriously, though, does the English public demand such risks and sacrifices from "Our own correspondent"? We think not. News is news; and eavesdropping, after all, at Versailles or in Printing House-square, is an unsavoury thing.

#### ON GRAIL MYTHS AND THE GERMAN GRAL-SAGE.

##### PART I.

AFTER quoting Voltaire's lament that the empire of reason was driving "the airy reign of fancy" far away from the earth, Lord Woodhouselee observes:—"It will require genius of a very remarkable order ever to revive among the polished nations of Europe a fervid taste for the romance of chivalry."

Professor Morley, in a lecture upon "King Arthur's Place in Literature," says:—"It is an indication of the bright genius of the present, which lays hold upon the Arthur myth as something real, something significant, something that one may make a part of one's own time and thought in the present day."

And to this present, of which Professor Morley speaks, Simrock also looked forward, since—after speaking of the second bloom of the German language and literature developed towards the end of the eighteenth century, out of which "may be seen the seeds of a new national consciousness ripening"—he adds: "If this be the case—and with high beating heart we see daily the mighty shoots of the young plant preserved—then will also the poets who dominated in the earlier period of our nation be no longer strange to us; and Wolfram von Eschenbach, the most German of all, be worthy of the greatest right to our admiration and to our love."

It is more than fifty years since Lord Woodhouselee wrote the passage alluded to—it is almost a hundred since Voltaire died; and the utilitarian spirit that both saw coming and come among the nations may have done its work, and man may have a brief breathing space given him wherein he may sit down and attend to that culture which Mr. Matthew Arnold so desires to find among his fellow-beings: a time to turn from the outer life to the inner, and, by raising the latter to its highest, refine and ennable the work-day world that lies around, and possibly bring upon the earth some of the chivalrous spirit depicted in the mediæval romances. For a little chivalry in a man's nature makes him none the worse a man—rather the better and the nobler—though the Mammon-worshipping world may call him romantic and Quixotic.

Progress is rough work, and carries man along too swiftly to give him time to wipe the dust and dirt from off his brow. Yet progress is the stepping-stone to the great ideal to be hewn out of it—even as the beautiful statue is shaped from the rough, unpolished, yet valuable block of Carrara marble.

Rough, uncouth, unplastic, unsightly, in confusion, is much of the raw material that progress and utilitarianism have produced and, as poetry is the first refining effort of barbarism, so may the second bloom of poetic thought and inspiration be the awakening of a new reign of high chivalrous feeling i

the world, after the semi-barbaric influence of go-aheadism—which may be described as the progress of the humanity, but not of the divinity, of man.

And so we turn, as children, lovingly to the old master spirits who ruled long and long ago; who taught bright lessons in dark ages, which the people of the age were not old enough to read; and, therefore, they have slumbered on in their hundreds of years of sleep, until the greatest poet of our times has burst through the thorny hedges that surrounded them, and aroused to life the sleeping beauty so long hidden from the gaze of the world.

Mr. J. M. Ludlow, in his "Popular Epics of the Middle Ages"—though he does not touch upon the cycle containing the Grail, Gral, or Sangreal legends—remarks that, "to this cycle belong poems of wonderful beauty and pathos, or even thoughtful depth, such as two of the French 'Tristans,' or the German 'Parzival,'" although, "in life-like vigour and freshness," he considers them as "far from equalling those of the former cycles." Yet, speaking of the olden song-smiths as a whole, he says, "Perhaps we shall find something to learn from them. . . . Perhaps, if we look closely into it, we may discover that the substance of poetry is there, of which we have too often kept only the garment."

Perhaps we may discover more: perhaps we may discover that these men taught in parables; that their harps were tuned to give forth chords, of which the key-note was appreciated but by the few; or which, perhaps, is only now sounding in the ears of a later generation; or whose light, like that of a hitherto undiscovered star, has but just reached the earth. As in each myth of Greece and Rome, Lord Bacon believed some great truth of nature or of philosophy to be set forth; as from the wild legends of the Scandinavian deities may beauteous meanings be elicited; and in the "Havamal," or High Song of Odin, the wisdom almost of Solomon be found; so in the Grail legends of the Arthurian cycle may be traced deep lessons of high thought and theologic teaching, and a spiritual element that gives, as it were, two lives to the poem—even as the outer and inner life of man make up the perfect being, yet one only generally known to his fellow-creatures, unless he is carefully studied by some loving bosom friend, to whom, through

the medium of a discriminating sympathy, the higher, truer reading of his manhood becomes appreciable.

In these remarks upon the Grail legends, I have more particularly in mind the German Gral-Sage of "Parzival," composed, or rather compiled, by Wolfram von Eschenbach—a German poet of the thirteenth century, born some time in the latter half of the twelfth. This Wolfram was "one of the most fertile of the Minnesingers and romance writers of his day." His birthplace appears to be a matter of dispute, but in his poem he calls himself a Bavarian (stanza 121, line 7, of canto Gurnemanz, "Parzival"). He was of good family, and led the roving life of a minstrel knight; not being overburdened with riches, yet well esteemed by his contemporaries. He took part in the poetic tournament, or "Wartburg-kriege," at the Thuringian Court—Walter der Vogelweide, Reimar the elder, Henry of Rispach, or the virtuous clerk, Henry of Osterdingen, and Klingsor von Ungerland, being among those present.

The poems of Walter der Vogelweide, like those of Wolfram von Eschenbach, were not unfrequently tinctured with a religious spirit: indeed, a religious and devotional train of thought seems to have been common to the poets of this age; and when we consider the times in which they lived, we shall scarcely wonder at it, since the Crusaders were then arousing a sentiment for religion among all classes, which, in earnest thinking minds, became something more sincere than a mere enthusiastic effervescence. Therefore, it was natural, in such an age, that the poet should turn to the Christian myth of the Grail rather than to the Sagas and Eddas of the Scandinavians, or the classic fables of Greece;—though these were not neglected, Wolfram himself being the author of the "German Homer," a poem of more than thirty thousand verses, celebrating the exploits of Hector and Paris. The popular mind, leaning towards a Christianity mixed up with romance and knight-errantry, necessitated poets to write up to its demands and cravings; and the search for and possession of the Holy Grail might seem an apt parallel to the longing felt for the possession of the Holy City, then in possession of the Infidels.

The history of the exploits of Arthur, King of the Britons, which had been compiled by Geoffrey of Monmouth in the

twelfth century, was one of the first works that laid the foundation of romantic history in Europe. Geoffrey of Monmouth died in 1154, in which same year Henry II. ascended the English throne; and in his reign lived one Walter Map, an Archdeacon of Oxford, of whom Professor Morley says—"Walter Map's work, if you remember, consisted especially in the placing of the Holy Grail in the centre of the romances that existed before his time. He took the legend of the Holy Grail as representing the Divine Mysteries, and he placed that in the centre of all—he made it the pivot on which the whole should turn."

Precisely what Walter Map was doing for England, Wolfram von Eschenbach was, not so many years later, doing for Germany, through his poem of "Parzival."

Simrock, the interpreter of Wolfram, and the renderer of his "Parzival" into modern German, says—"He does not confine himself to the Breton Saga, and the circle of the Knights of the Round Table, but interweaves them as an episode proceeding from the Gral." And further on he observes—"What stamps 'Parzival' as an undying work of art, whereby Wolfram leaves those who have supplied him with the material far behind, is the poetic consciousness with which he works all these externals into the inner life of his hero, whose spiritual development he sets before us in all its phases."

With Chretien de Troyes, who before Wolfram (1170—1190) had handled the Gral-Sage, this ground-thought is not perceptible. "Neither," says Simrock, "is it to be found, as far as we know, in the French and Provençal poets generally."

But Wolfram von Eschenbach does not take Chretien de Troyes as his authority; in fact, he blames him for his treatment of the Saga, since in stanza 827 of the last canto we read—

"Chretien de Troyes, full surely he  
Hath done this legend injury;  
Which well may Kiot's wrath excite,  
Who brings the truer tale to light."

According to Simrock, the material that came into Wolfram's hands appears to have been full of confusion, and simply a collection of badly joined fables, even as the Arthurian legends had been to Walter Map. But Wolfram, placing the Grail as the centre of his Parzival-Sage, gave to the

world a psychological epic; or, as I have called it in "The Search for the Gral," a sort of mediæval "Pilgrim's Progress."

With regard to the Grail myths, there are several; the most popular story being that the Gral, Sangreal, or Holy Grail, was the salver or vessel from which our Lord ate at the Last Supper with His disciples, and in which the clotted blood was deposited when He was taken down from the Cross.

It had been seized by a Jew, who took it to Pontius Pilate; but he, not being willing to have in his possession anything that had belonged to the Saviour, gave it to Joseph of Arimathea. The legend further states, that Joseph of Arimathea, being cast into prison, was miraculously sustained there by its power for forty-two years; during which time he neither hungered, nor thirsted, nor felt the miseries of incarceration.

After Joseph's release from prison, he travelled with the Gral through several countries of Europe; and it was at length given into the keeping of a king in Britain (so say some), called the Fisherman King.

A second, found in Mabinoge (Mabinogion, from the "Clyfr coch Hergest," and other ancient Welsh MSS., London, 1839)—from which, says Simrock, one has the first source of the Parzival-Sage, that it was a dish on which the head of a man lay. This brings us to the story of John the Baptist, which I epitomize.

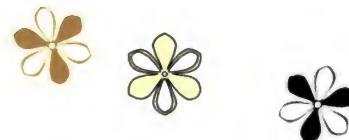
"The head of John the Baptist was, in early times, an object of much reverence. According to Sozomenes, it was discovered, in the reign of the Emperor Valens, with the monks belonging to the Macedonian fraternity. As, however, Valens was an Arian, the relic resisted being taken to Constantinople; the mules employed in its conveyance obstinately refusing to draw it farther than to the village of Cosilai, not far from Chalcedon. Later on it was, however, brought to Constantinople in the reign of Theodosius, who was orthodox in his views. This was accomplished much against the wishes of a pious matron who had tended the holy relic at Cosilai. Theodosius raised a magnificent temple for it; and a priest of Servian extraction, who had assisted the matron in her pious offices, seeing that the holy head had made no resistance to its removal as on the former occasion, followed it to Constantinople, where he embraced the Catholic faith, and daily offered up the sacrifice of the mass before the relic."

In the fifth century the head disappeared from Constantinople, but was brought back in the ninth; and we hear that, in the year 1027, Basil the purple-born being at the point of death, Alexius, abbot of Studion, brought the relic to the bedside, for which he was immediately appointed patriarch.

Another account is that the Holy Grail was a miraculous stone. In the "Wartburg-kriege" it is stated that "sixty thousand angels who wished to drive God from heaven had made a crown for Lucifer. As the archangel Michael dashed it from his head, a stone fell out, and this stone is the Gral."

THE EXTRAVAGANT demands of Prussia in the way of indemnity are a not unexpected corollary to the system of "requisitioning" which they have unsparingly indulged in during the whole period of their occupation of French territory. The plan of "requisitioning" is comparatively new in modern European warfare; but it appears to be necessary to the maintenance of a great army in a hostile country, often at a distance of many miles from the base of its operations. How different was the policy pursued by the armies of the Duke of Wellington is well known; but then his whole force was hardly equal in numbers to a single Prussian *corps d'armée* of to-day. Our readers will remember the remark of Thackeray, "when he went to survey, with eagle glance, the field of Waterloo," that, during Wellington's occupation of the Low Countries, "it may be said, as a rule, that every Englishman in the Duke's army paid his way. The soldier who drank at the village inn, not only drank but paid his score; and Donald the Highlander, billeted in the Flemish farmhouse, rocked the baby's cradle while Jean and Jeannette were out getting in the hay." The French experience of a Prussian army is not of so pleasant a kind. But they appear in the character of invaders, it is true.

THE POINT OF THE following anecdote might apply as well to the new German Emperor as it undoubtedly did to his ancestor. Dr. Baylis was an English physician of great repute in the middle of the last century. His skill obtained for him the post of physician to the then King of Prussia. On his first introduction, the King is said to have observed to the doctor, that to have acquired so much experience, he must necessarily have killed a great many people. To which the doctor replied, "Pas tant que votre Majesté"—"Not so many as your Majesty."



## ON GRAIL MYTHS AND THE GERMAN GRAL-SAGE. PART II.

WOLFRAM VON ESCHENBACH, in "Parzival" (canto Trevizent, stanzas 453, &c.), gives an account of the manner in which his authority, Kiot the Provençal, discovered an old manuscript, in Arabic characters, at Toledo; from which he learns that Flegetanis, a heathen celebrated for his knowledge of curious arts—descended on the mother's side from the Israelitish race, and of heathen descent on the father's; born, as the poet says, "before baptism became our protection from the torments of hell"—read in the stars that "a thing will appear called the Gral;" that a troop of angels left it upon the earth; and, further, that whoever was called to the service of the Gral was truly blessed among mankind.

Upon reading this account, Kiot set himself to work to find whether any people had ever been found worthy to serve the Gral.

covered the spot from whence the arch springs, else he would find a treasure, hidden by the gods of old, that would make him rich beyond his fellows—and wiser too; for, when the foundations of the bridge Bifrost were laid, Odin, the All-Father, whispered words of deep wisdom into the earth that have lain buried there for ages; and when this corner-stone of Bifrost is found, those words shall issue forth like sweet-toned music, and fill the soul of the finder with the wisdom of the gods; and in his heart shall rise such undreamed-of bliss, that he will never care to leave the earth.

But one might go on indefinitely bringing forward from the mythologies and traditions of all countries and faiths, certain similarities which might, perhaps, only serve to render more obscure and doubtful the original source. Therefore, to only one other theory will I call attention, and that one I proound with all due reverence.

I have mentioned that Simrock alludes to the propagation of Jewish tradition with respect to the Grail myth; also that, in the various legends, the Grail is said to be formed of stone of some kind, in most cases possessing inherent virtue. Now the Jews, scattered throughout all countries, and retaining still their distinct nationality, retained also their knowledge of the prophecies relating to themselves; and the return to his own land, and the glories of the restored Jerusalem, were themes constantly in the mind of the devout Jew.

It is true that the Jews were regarded with antipathy by the Christians at large; nevertheless, there were probably those who were desirous of knowing something of the learning of this remarkable people, and who might desire of them a song—even as their enemies had done in past ages, when they wept in captivity by the waters of Babylon.

Would not the Jew, in answer to the request, naturally dwell upon the splendours of the Holy City—whose walls should be called “salvation,” and “whose gates praise”? whose “stones should be laid with fair colours, its foundations with sapphires, its windows of agates, its gates of carbuncle, and its borders of precious stones”? “That beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, should be the city beloved of God—peace should be within its walls, and prosperity within its palaces.” And forth from his lips would pour—like wondrous romance, like magnificent bursts of such poetry as

they had never heard before—the powerful eloquence of the inspired writers of his nation: teeming with promises of things fair and blessed, all dependent upon the stone—the chief corner-stone—that was to lay the foundation of a glorious future.

Might not this corner-stone, upon which so much was to be upbuilt, sound in the ears of the listeners like some mystic materialism, some temporal acquisition, that should ensure to its possessor all glory and blessing? Is it unreasonable to suppose that this may have been the case, and that upon the Jewish foreshadowing of the blessing and the inheritance may have been built up the earthly kingdom, and the earthly medium through which men were to possess it? Might not the type become the reality in the mediæval mind, and creep into a myth in accordance with the spirit of the times; and this myth become type again in the heart of the poet, touched with the dawning light of yet imperfect Christian instruction, and so serve to shadow forth a theologic teaching once more through allegory?

Simrock thinks that Wolfram von Eschenbach was not acquainted with the legend relating to Joseph of Arimathea. It certainly is not directly alluded to; and yet one cannot but feel that, in the *Lapis exilis*, there is indirect evidence of the Christ-element. This stone, “which is called the Gral,” and which is said to have had the power (canto Trevizent, stanzas 469, &c.) of renewing the life of the Phœnix, so that it became more beautiful than it was before, was also said to be able to keep in life those who gazed upon it; that those who kept it ever before them should always be fresh and lovely; that it was food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty; the source of all good; that men must be called to its service; that their names should be found written thereon, and that only the pure in heart could serve it; and also—which fact seems to bear reference to our Lord, and not to St. John the Baptist—that it was on Good Friday (not on Midsummer Day) that the dove descended from heaven, to renew the strength of the Holy Gral—

“A dove its flight from heaven doth wing,  
And bears to earth an offering,  
Upon the holy stone to lay  
A small white wafer. Then away,  
With pinions spread and shining crest,  
It seeks again its heavenly rest.”

Here we have the dove, the emblem of

the Holy Spirit, descending to testify, as it were, to the Divine power of the Grail. And from all these circumstances, allusions, and indirect supports, one may surely gather that Wolfram must have attached to the *Gral-mythus* the deepest, fullest signification of which it is susceptible, and which is more clearly set forth in the story concerning Joseph of Arimathea than in any other.

At all events, it would appear that, keeping this myth in mind, one can weave from the Parzival-Sage a theologic teaching, clothed in the garb of chivalrous romance; even as one can learn it from the dream that John Bunyan dreamed in Bedford Gaol, or from Mr. Tennyson's Arthurian poems; and that we shall find, as the late Dean of Canterbury found in those latter fields of beauty, that though fair prospects are blighted, though storms of passion beat, though doubts arise and superstition assails, yet the trusting soul, rising above the earthliness of earth, shall find at last that "at eventide there is light, and the end is glory."



cumstances, over which he has no control. If I thought that were true, I would sell this London house, and go and live with his people in New Lanark—and I might as well."

Here he walked a while up and down, took out his heavy leathern pocket-book, looked at the little legal instrument with which it was furnished, and felt very much as if he should like to put it in the fire. But he was restrained by the respect he felt for English law, and for other reasons too.

"After all," he muttered, "it had better come from my hands; and then— He will hate me for ever after; and yet I would rather break it to him. Why not? Why should he not hate an old fool like I am, who has certainly done no good by poking his nose into the business of other people?

"It's about all over with me," continued Old Daylight. "This is the one grand mistake I have made; and that mistake is a knock-down blow. I am too old to recover it. 'I went up like a rocket,' as Dr. M'Phie has it, in Rolt's paper, 'and I come down like a stick.' That's what I do."

To comfort himself, Old Daylight mixed a glass of that which teetotallers call "alcoholic poison." Happily, he lived in the days before teetotalism became rampant, and had not even a suspicion that he was doing an evil thing; on the contrary, he felt refreshed, and somewhat renovated; but the events of the day weighed upon him, and he knew not where to turn for comfort. So he sat down in his easy chair—one which modern luxury, by the way, would deem uncomfortable—and read some pages of Shakspeare for a consolation.

He sat there a long time. His candles burnt lower and lower; and Edgar Wade did not return.

He summoned his housekeeper, and from that astute lady learned as much as he could from anybody as to the very moment when the Earl of Chesterton and a lady had called, how long they had remained, and almost what had passed in their presence. But, as we have seen, the dying lady spoke in so low a tone, that the most acute listener in the vast and well-built old house could have learnt but little; and Mr. Forster felt that, to do her justice, the housekeeper told all that she knew, and that it was rather her misfortune than her fault that she knew no more.

"And Mr. Edgar Wade—was he present when the poor lady died?"

"I think not, sir; he went into the room while the nurse was yet there, but some time after the sad affair."

"Sad affair!" muttered Forster. "That is one way to mention it. Happy release, I should call it. And did he stay long in the house afterwards?"

"No. He came downstairs at once, and went through the garden into the stables, where he keeps his horse."

"I see. That will do. You can go to bed. I will wait up for him."

The housekeeper, subdued and quiet, as most servants are when there is a death in the house, went away, nothing loath. She had thought much more of her master since a real Earl had called there, taking a pleasure in "carriage company," and feeling somewhat exalted by the fact. Still, she was perpetually haunted by her master's mysterious business; and, being unable to penetrate the mystery, put her worst construction on it. She passed into the room furtively almost, and on tiptoe, where the watcher sat, and the dead lay with the candles burning; and, nothing afraid, expressed herself delighted that all was "nice and comfortable," and then stole up to bed.

Old Daylight placed his bandanna on his head, and settled himself in his chair, and in due time fell asleep. He had taken the precaution to put the chain of the door up, so that his friend and *protégé* could not enter without awaking him.

In some hours, he awoke cold and chilly. The rushlight he had taken the precaution to set light to had burnt—in the sulky, sullen manner peculiar to those nearly extinct luminaries—almost to its socket, and was throwing from its position the pattern of its pierced tin guard, in little dim round holes of light, not only on the floor, but on the ceiling.

"God bless me!" ejaculated the old man. "Why, I *must* have been asleep."

How is it that we assure ourselves thus apologetically of any slight dereliction of duty? Old Forster had been asleep, and to his own satisfaction. He felt cold and chilly; and, rubbing and chafing his hands, he lighted a candle, and went to the street door. The chain was still up; no one had passed through; but the old gentleman—undetermined and dissatisfied as we always are when we have been watching, and are

disappointed—opened the door and looked out.

The morning was cold, and very dark. Queen Anne-street looked even more dull than it did on ordinary occasions, when the maximum of its cheerfulness was about that indicated by the minimum of cheerfulness in the catacombs. Round the corner, in the next street, and at some distance, the watchman—not yet disused, and kept up as a monument of parochial charity as well as of ornament, or principally for the reason that the parish really did not know what else to do with the poor, old, used-up specimen of humanity—was calling out, "Half-past four of a frosty morning;" and Old Forster listened to the "linked *weakness*, long drawn out," of the old fellow's cry till he felt chilled.

He shut the door, drew the bolts, and came in and sat down for a moment, to think.

"Why, he can't have come in," said he to himself. "He can't have come in."

He repeated this obvious fact once or twice to himself, as if he were assured of its truth by repetition. Then he suddenly recollects that, as Edgar Wade went out by the stable-yard, he might have returned thereby; but, no—the bolts were drawn.

The old gentleman, to reassure himself, went up into the barrister's rooms. They were empty. The bed had not been slept in. The light shone through the keyhole of the door where the dead lady lay; and Old Daylight shuddered with cold, and with a deadening and perplexing feeling, as he came downstairs.

"Umph!" he said to himself, as he prepared to undress, and to go to bed. "I did not expect this. He has fled the country, I hope. What for? What for?"

The phantom before him, the guilt of Edgar Wade, began to build itself up as he lay down to rest, and kept him awake. At first he had thought that any knowledge the barrister had of the matter, even after he had examined the letters found in César Negretti's bundle, was but little; but now—now, in this supreme moment, why was he absent?

Surely the man was—if ambitious and impatient—too clever to criminate *himself*. Old Daylight endeavoured to comfort himself with this thought; but a horrid suspicion, that made his blood run cold, told him that he might be wrong. His faith in

poor human nature fell to the lowest degree on the scale—when, happily for himself, he fell into a sound sleep, and did not wake till late in the morning.

Dressing and shaving, breakfasting or opening his letters, Mr. Forster was haunted with but one idea, and that was—of the whereabouts of the barrister. Hardly had he breakfasted, when a messenger from the police court put a note into his hand, written in the familiar and noble Roman caligraphy of Inspector Stevenson, begging him to come down at once, as something unexampled in the case before them had turned up.

Stevenson—faithful to his friend—hinted that he wanted him to know it before the magistrate had it placed before him.

It needs not to be said that Mr. Forster hurried to the office now so familiar to the reader, nor that he was received by Stevenson with an official coolness and dryness peculiar to that officer, who was all the while excited by the news, and as eager to get to the bottom of it as himself.

"Come here," said Stevenson—"here is an old acquaintance of ours," and he led him to the spare room in which Patsy Quelch and César Negretti met with Mr. Brownjohn the night before; and in this room—not much the worse for the night he had passed, with the exception that his coat looked a little more fluffy, and his hair somewhat rougher—sat Mr. Barnett Slammers, and his friend Mr. Scorem. That ornament of the law was rather the worse for his vigil; his bright, merry eyes looked somewhat larger, and a dark ring round each told of excitement and night watching.

"Hallo! Mr. Slammers," cried Old Forster, "can you throw any light upon this mystery?"

"I can't. But I think this gentleman can," returned the reporter, laying a kindly hand on the clerk's shoulder.

"And of what kind?" asked the old gentleman, eagerly looking at the Inspector, in whose face he read a confirmation of the words that dropped from the lips of Mr. Slammers.

That kindly Bohemian, who had an innate love of justice, looking at the Inspector and Mr. Forster, said—

"If you gentlemen were not very good fellows, and had not done me innumerable good turns—"

"Which we may do again," returned the Inspector, very drily.

"No doubt—no doubt; but that's neither here nor there—I should reserve all we have to say for the beak. But it must come before you sooner or later, and I am anxious that you should know the rights of this. This gentleman—"

Here, again, he laid his hand upon Scorem, who kept a very strict silence, and, in consequence of his legal education, determined not to speak unless spoken to.

"This gentleman will, I think, furnish you with the missing link in the chain of evidence with regard to the terrible crime in the neighbourhood of Kensal-green."

Mr. Slammers used a great many words; but it was not to be wondered at, as his profession led him to indulge in a surplusage when he used his pen, and his tongue had caught it from that instrument of a ready writer.

"Well," returned Old Forster, "we are glad to hear anything, Mr. Slammers; and due justice shall be done to you for putting this before the law."

"Oh! I've nothing to do with it," returned the reporter. "This gentleman does it all—*sua sponte*, as they say in the classics; and, let me tell you, he does it at great cost to his feelings; and not only to them, but to his position and prospects in life, which by this action will be for ever blighted."

The breath of Mr. Scorem gave evidence of his feelings during this speech: it came and went more quickly than before, and the bright eyes seemed to glow the brighter in that shadowed room, as the honest Bohemian put his case forward. Mr. Slammers was evidently determined that Scorem should not lose by it, if *he* could help it.

"Very gratifying, I am sure," answered the Bow-street runner; "very much so. And now, what is to be shown us?"

"This!" said Scorem, dramatically, producing the end of the foil, the broken part of which was ground to a chisel end, and was very sharp.

"God bless me!" returned Old Daylight; "that's a Solingen blade, and just the length to fit the broken foil I took from Lord Wim-pole's room."

"Just so!" uttered the Inspector.

"And where did you find this important piece of evidence?"

"Concealed between the boards in his master's chambers, evidently hidden away

with a purpose, as such a weapon could not well be thrown away, nor easily destroyed." Thus spoke Slammers, who knew how to marshal evidence as well as the cleverest barrister at the Old Bailey bar.

"God bless me!" uttered Old Daylight, looking at Scorem with a confused notion of having seen him before, but having, from his agitation and the novelty of the place, forgotten him. "And who is your master?"

Mr. Scorem answered the direct question with a voice altered and made solemn with emotion—

"Mr. Edgar Wade, Barrister-at-Law, Garden-court, Temple."

